DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 161 569 RC 010 745

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TITLE Ft. McDowell Indian Community Preschool Program.
PUB DATE Jun 78
NOTE 18p.; For related document, see ED 145 982

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *American Indians; *Community Schools; Cultural Awareness; Cultural Background; Cultural Education; *Early Childhood Education; Emotional Development; Family Counseling; Motor Development; Parent Attitudes; *Parent Education; Parent Participation; *Preschool Education; *Program Evaluation; Skill Development; Social Experience
IDENTIFIERS Fort McDowell Indian Reservation AZ; Yavapai (Tribe)

ABSTRACT

A two-class preschool program for two to six year old Yavapai children was developed by the Ft. McDowell Indian Community to include activities and experiences to meet the special educational needs of youngsters on the Fort McDowell Indian Reservation, Arizona. The five program components included: (1) classroom and training activity to promote each child's maximum development in all areas of intellectual, social, physical, and emotional functioning; (2) "Outreach to Parents" to encourage parental participation in classes as aides as well as in regular education classes for parents; (3) family counseling; (4) involvement of tribal elders and historians to teach tribal origins, customs, and history; and (5) development of a culturally relevant curriculum by parents and staff. During the third year of the program 22 children participated in the preschool program (14 in pre-kindergarten and 8 in kindergarten). Analyses of findings from various pre and post testings indicated that the project was effective in contributing to such skill areas as social readiness, motor, language, and social relations. There was insufficient data to access the project's effectiveness in modifying parents' attitudes toward child rearing practices. (DS)

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FT. MC DOWELL INDIAN COMMUNITY
PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

BY

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RC 010745

TEMPE, ARIZONA

JUNE, 1978

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FT. MCDOWELL INDIAN COMMUNITY
PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

The young children of the Fort McDowell Indian Reservation are as eager to learn and experience life as all children. Their situation, however, is rather unique. Fort McDowell was decommissioned as an army fort in 1903 and the land was given by the government to the Mohaves, Apaches and Yavapais for use as a reservation. For unknown reasons many of the Mohave and Apaches left. The Yavapai tribe became divided. Ancient tribal customs have been lost along with the identity of the people. Although aware of modern child rearing practices and educational benefits, young parents tend to allow the small child to grow with little direction because the proper resources for providing for the children are unavailable.

There has been no educational facility on the reservation. Preschoolers have had to travel great distances to the nearest headstart program. Because of the crowded conditions Ft. McDowell children have not attended preschool. Kindergarten children also have had to commute a great distance. When these children begin first grade they most often have little formal, structured learning and no classroom or group experiences. Academic failure and dropouts are widespread among Indian children.

In recognition of this complex problem the Fort McDowell Indian Community established a two-class preschool and kindergarten program on the reservation to provide children with a structured learning opportunity, encouraging and enhancing communication skills and promoting new experiences to increase learning capacity.

The program was planned to provide parental participation designed to enhance child rearing skills, heighten problem solving abilities and enable them to work with their children as teachers.

Tribal elders were to be involved in providing historical material and demonstrating skills to increase pride in Indian heritage and maintain long-standing involvement in the educational process.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The principal purpose of this project was to continue and strengthen the existing two-class preschool program for children between the ages of two and six years at Fort McDowell, Arizona, with discussion groups to include parents of these children and of younger children, who wanted to increase their knowledge of early child developmental needs.

The project in pursuing the above goal, sought to achieve the following specific objectives:

1. Children between the ages of three and six years will demonstrate improved social skills as measured by the Caldwell Preschool Inventory, administered pre-post of the school year.

2. Children between the ages of two and three will demonstrate improved motor skills as measured by the Denver Developmental Scale and by the Butler Evaluation Instrument, administered pre-post of the school year.

3. Children between the ages of two and six will demonstrate improved language ability as measured by the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, administered pre-post of the school year.

4. Children between the ages of three and six will demonstrate improved school readiness, including improved ability to conceptualize and grasp number concepts as measured by the Caldwell Preschool Inventory, administered pre-post of the school year.

5. Children between the ages of two and six will demonstrate improved social skills as measured by the Caldwell Preschool Inventory and the Butler Evaluation Instrument, administered pre-post of the school year.

6. Parents of children between the ages of two and six will express more flexible attitudes towards parenting, as measured by the Parent As A Teacher Questionnaire, administered pre-post of the school year.

SECTION II

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This program designed by the Fort McDowell Indian Community was planned to include activities and experiences which would contribute to the development of young children, with specific attention to meeting the special education needs of Fort McDowell youngsters. The program was designed to provide supportive services for parents, families and tribal elders, as well as strengthen the Indian community through its relationship with the child center.

Five basic components were planned. The classroom and training activity was designed to promote each child's maximum development in all areas of functioning - intellectual, social, physical and emotional, and provide a training laboratory in which parents could interact with the children while advancing their own knowledge.

The structure of the children's daily schedule was flexible, allowing for leisurely transition between activities.

Both the kindergarten and pre-kindergarten classes operated on a five-day-a-week schedule. The two classrooms functioned in a double-wide mobile trailer. The space provided was conducive to achievement of program objectives.

The pre-kindergarten and kindergarten schedules included the following:

Outside Activities: wheel toys, climber, sand play, water table

Inside Activities: puzzles, dolls, books, blocks and art activities

Group Time: puppets, songs, ginger plays, and matching games

Snack Time: good nutrition stressed with fruit juice, raw vegetables, fresh fruit, or crackers

Story Time: record stories, felt board stories, as well as books by the teacher

Brief Outside Period: lunch set-up

Lunch: time to talk about new foods and saying please & thank you

Learning activities were organized to suit the individualistic, active and sensory-oriented child. The work-play period was the heart of the day's program. The indoor and outdoor periods offered opportunities such as:

1. Making choices and following them through.
2. To observe and clarify ideas about things, people, animals and relationships to the environment.
3. To increase understanding and use of language.
4. To develop, exercise and increase an attitude of curiosity and eagerness for learning.

The opportunities were quite extensive and are not listed in full in this report.

The classes were divided into three groups for reading readiness activities and reading workbook activities as prescribed in the Lippincott and Peabody curriculum materials utilized.

In addition, a variety of field-trips scheduled provided the children with new experiences to benefit from.

Twenty-two (22) children participated in the preschool program; fourteen (14) participated in the pre-kindergarten class and eight (8) participated in the kindergarten class.

The second component was labeled "Outreach to Parents". The proposal included two components of parent involvement; participation in the classroom as parent aides and regular education classes.

Ten mothers were able to participate as mother helpers in the classroom throughout the year. Mothers of preschool children were employed full-time and this factor prevented their participation in the classroom during the day.

Family Counseling was the third component of the Fort McDowell preschool project. This component was to be directed toward the weakening of family life through loss of tribal traditions without appropriate replacement. Although a full time social worker was not employed as was proposed, the project staff worked closely with the tribal social worker.

The fourth project component was the Involvement of Tribal Elders and Historians. Although this component took on different dimensions than originally proposed, much has been accomplished. With the aid of Dr. Khera of Arizona State University, the story of tribal origins and important historical facts has been published.

Weekly, through the efforts of the tribal social worker, tribal elders visited the preschool to demonstrate their unique skills in basket making, quilting, etc. The elders have also constructed an Indian Wicki-up (a grass house) on the preschool playground. The children had several opportunities to learn of tribal customs etc. while attending tribal elders' gatherings held regularly at the tribal building. Tribal elder involvement has been increased during this project year.

The fifth component was the development of culturally relevant curriculum materials. Curriculum materials for the classroom have been developed by parents and staff during the course of the project year as needed.

The young children of the Fort McDowell Indian Community, being in great need of local organized education, profited by and will continue to profit by the sincere effort and concern of teachers, staff, parents, and tribal members.

Of the five selected components, classroom activities was most extensively fulfilled. This component was directed toward five of the six objectives and indicative of the attitude that the direct and immediate education of the children was most essential.

SECTION III

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Various instruments were used and data collected in an effort to obtain

meaningful information regarding the effectiveness and impact of the various components of this Project. Used in this evaluation were:

Caldwell Preschool Inventory
Denver Developmental Test
Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test
Butler Evaluation Instrument
Parent As A Teacher Questionnaire

The instruments indicated above were administered on a pre-post test basis. Pretest and post test means were compared by means of a correlated t-test and differences between these means were considered significantly different if $p < .05$. The .01 level of significance was also ascertained and where the mean differences exceeded $p < .01$ this lower level is reported.

CALDWELL PRESCHOOL INVENTORY:

Analysis of the Caldwell test data indicated the project was successful in improving the social skills, readiness skills, and the ability to conceptualize and grasp number concepts for preschool participants.

A total of nineteen (19) preschoolers completed both the pretest and post test. This represents 86.4% of the twenty-two (22) subjects who actually participated in the preschool program. The results of the data analysis for these 19 subjects indicated that there was a significant difference between the group's performance on the pretest (37.6) and their performance on the post test (49.4) with improvement shown ($p. < .01$). (See Table I).

When the prekindergarten childrens' data were analyzed individually it was revealed that the twelve students completing both pretests and post tests did make a significant improvement between pretest and post test ($p < .01$). A mean gain of 13.0 was realized by these twelve participants. (See Table I).

The older subjects (kindergarten) realized a gain of 9.6 between pretest and post test which was significant ($p. < .05$). (See Table I).

It can be concluded from the data analysis that the project was successful in improving those skills measured by the Caldwell Preschool Inventory for the total group of preschool participants, and also the group of participants in the two age groups. (See objectives 1, 4, and 5 previously stated).

It is recommended that the Caldwell Preschool Inventory be continued for children participating in the project.

DENVER DEVELOPMENTAL TEST:

Analysis of the Denver Developmental Test data for 3 year old participants indicated the project was successful in contributing to the improvement of the motor skills of these participants.

The Denver tests were scored by considering those tasks that each child should be able to accomplish at his/her age level. A total of 100 points was possible and the points awarded was determined by multiplying the percentage of those tasks completed that should have been completed for the child's age level by 100. Thus, the score also reflects the percentage of tasks completed.

A total of six (6) of the 3 years of age had both pre and post test scores available for analysis. This group of subjects had a mean score on the pretest of 58.8 and a mean score of 80.8 on the post test. This gain of 12.0 points between pretest and post test was significant ($p < .01$). (See Table I).

It can be concluded from the data analysis that the activities of the project contributed to the motor skill development realized by the 3 year old project participants. (See objective 2 previously stated).

It is recommended that the project continue to provide those activities which have been shown to be effective in fostering motor skill development in these young participants. It is also recommended that the Denver Developmental Test be used to assess motor skill development in the new project year.

PEABODY PICTURE VOCABULARY TEST:

Analysis of the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) data indicated the project was successful in improving the language skills of the project participants.

A total of nineteen (19) preschoolers completed both the pretest and post test. This figure represents 86.4% of the twenty-two subjects who actually participated in the preschool program. The results of the data analysis indicated there was a significant difference between the group's performance on the pretest (37.7) and their performance on the post test (50.4) with improvement shown ($p < .01$). (See Table I).

When the pre-kindergarten participants were considered individually it was revealed that the twelve (12) subjects completing both pre and post tests made a significant gain (14.8) from pretest (32.7) to post test (47.5) ($p < .01$). (See Table I).

The older subjects (kindergarten) realized a gain of 9.1 points between pretest (46.3) and post test (55.4). This gain was statistically significant ($p < .01$). (See Table I).

It can be concluded from the data analysis that the activities of the project contributed significantly to the improvement of the language skills of the preschool participants. This improvement was realized for both the younger group and the older group (kindergarten). (See objective 3 previously stated).

It is recommended that those activities designed to improve the language ability of participants be continued and modified only when modifications promise to be better than existing activities.

TABLE I

PRE AND POST TEST COMPARISONS
FOR PRESCHOOL PARTICIPANTS ON
CALDWELL, DENVER DEVELOPMENTAL, AND PPVT TESTS

INSTRUMENT	PRE-KINDERGARTEN	KINDERGARTEN	TOTAL GROUP
Caldwell Test	Pre M = 32.7 s = 13.3 Post M = 45.7 s = 9.2 t-ratio 6.511** change 13.0 N = 12	Pre M = 46.1 s = 10.0 Post M = 55.7 s = 4.5 t-ratio 3.504* change 9.6 N = 7	Pre M = 37.6 s = 13.8 Post M = 49.4 s = 9.2 t-ratio 7.081** change 11.8 N = 19
Denver Test	Pre M = 58.8 s = 12.4 Post M = 80.8 s = 9.1 t-ratio 4.381** change 12.0 N = 6		
PPVT Test	Pre M = 32.7 s = 13.9 Post M = 47.5 s = 4.5 t-ratio 4.476** change 14.8 N = 12	Pre M = 46.3 s = 10.4 Post M = 55.4 s = 7.9 t-ratio 5.078** change 9.1 N = 7	Pre M = 37.7 s = 14.3 Post M = 50.4 s = 7.1 t-ratio 5.576** change 12.7 N = 19

*Indicates significant difference between means - $p < .05$
**Indicates significant difference between means - $p < .01$

BUTLER EVALUATION INSTRUMENT:

Analysis of the Butler Evaluation Instrument data indicated the project was successful in contributing to the improvement of the social relation's skills for preschool participants.

The Butler Evaluation Instrument provides information for evaluation in the areas of self-concept, other people, physical environment, world of ideas, and total or composite social relations skills.

Data analysis relative to those skills or relations presented above indicated there were significant differences between the pretest level and post test level in all areas for the total group of preschoolers (N = 19). The group made significant gains from pretest to post test ($p < .01$) in the areas of self-concept, other people, physical environment, world of ideas, and total or composite. (See Table II).

When the groups were analyzed individually the results indicated the pre-kindergarten group (N = 12) made significant gains from pre to post test in the areas of other people, physical environment, world of ideas, and total or composite ($p < .01$). This group also made significant gains in self-concept ($p < .05$). The kindergarteners (N = 7) made significant gains from pre to post test in the physical environment, world of ideas, and total or composite areas ($p < .01$). (See Table II).

It can be concluded from the data analysis that the project was successful in contributing to the improvement of the social relations skills of preschool participants. For the older preschoolers this is true in the areas of physical environment, world of ideas and total. For the younger preschoolers contributions were evident in all the areas. (See objectives 2 and 5 previously stated).

It is recommended that efforts exerted toward improving social relations skills be continued and activities aimed specifically at improving the skills of the Butler Instrument be continued.

TABLE II

PRE AND POST TEST COMPARISONS
FOR PRESCHOOL PARTICIPANTS ON
BUTLER TEST

INSTRUMENT	PRE-KINDERGARTEN	KINDERGARTEN	TOTAL GROUP
Butler Test Self-Concept	Pre M = 2.4 s = .4 Post M = 3.0 s = .7 t-ratio 2.632* change .6 N = 12	Pre M = 2.5 s = .6 Post M = 2.8 s = .5 t-ratio 1.650 change .3 N = 7	Pre M = 2.4 s = .5 Post M = 2.9 s = .5 t-ratio 3.028** change .5 N = 19
Butler Test Other People	Pre M = 2.1 s = .6 Post M = 2.9 s = .5 t-ratio 4.718** change .8 N = 12	Pre M = 2.6 s = .6 Post M = 2.8 s = .6 t-ratio .887 change .2 N = 7	Pre M = 2.3 s = .7 Post M = 2.9 s = .5 t-ratio 3.911** change .6 N = 19
Butler Test Physical Environment	Pre M = 2.3 s = .6 Post M = 3.0 s = .5 t-ratio 6.703** change .7 N = 12	Pre M = 2.9 s = .7 Post M = 4.3 s = .5 t-ratio 7.555** change 1.4 N = 7	Pre M = 2.5 s = .7 Post M = 3.5 s = .8 t-ratio 7.590** change .4 N = 19
Butler Test World of Ideas	Pre M = 2.0 s = .8 Post M = 3.1 s = .7 t-ratio 7.602** change 1.1 N = 12	Pre M = 2.7 s = .6 Post M = 3.4 s = .5 t-ratio 5.080** change .7 N = 7	Pre M = 2.3 s = .8 Post M = 3.2 s = .6 t-ratio 8.469** change .9 N = 19
Butler Test Total Score	Pre M = 2.2 s = .6 Post M = 3.0 s = .4 t-ratio 6.257** change .8 N = 12	Pre M = 2.7 s = .6 Post M = 3.3 s = .4 t-ratio 6.029** change .6 N = 7	Pre M = 2.4 s = .6 Post M = 3.1 s = .5 t-ratio 8.161** change .7 N = 19

*Indicates significant difference between means - $p < .05$
**Indicates significant difference between means - $p < .01$

PARENT AS A TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE:

The Parent As A Teacher (PAAT) instrument was selected primarily to assess the effectiveness of the "Outreach To Parents" component of the project.

Since the parents were involved in parent training sessions, the PAAT instrument provides an assessment of project impact upon parents. Also, the data provided by this instrument offers an indication as to the effect of parental involvement in the classroom as aides and the effect children involved in the project have upon their parents. This would assume that these preschool children can modify their parents' or parent surrogates' attitudes and behaviors by interacting with them following their preschool experiences.

The PAAT instrument is designed to measure parental child rearing attitudes. The PAAT provides information for evaluation relative to child rearing attitudes in the areas of creativity, frustration, control, play, teaching-learning and a total or composite measure.

A total of eleven (11) parents or parent surrogates completed the PAAT instrument on a pre - post basis. This data was subjected to analysis again using a correlated t-test to compare pre and post test means. The results indicated that there was no significant differences between pre and post test means in all areas tested by the PAAT ($p > .05$). It is worthy of note, however, that a score of 2.5 or above would be considered desirable on the PAAT and these parents or parent surrogates had desirable attitudes toward all of these child rearing practices at the time of pretesting and at the time of post testing. (See Table III). The eleven parents completing the PAAT on a pre - post basis represented 6 parents or parent surrogates of children 3 to 6 years or those children participating in the preschool program. Five (5) of these parents or parent surrogates represented children from infancy to age 3, or those children participating in the Parent Infant Program.

The analyses contained in Table III was for the 11 parents or parent surrogates. Since no significant differences were found between pre and post test means, analyses of the separate groups of 6 and 5 parents respectively, were not completed.

Since the number of parents completing the PAAT instrument on a pre - post basis was so small (less than 1/3 of the parents or parent surrogates of participants in the two programs), it is impossible to draw any conclusions relative to the effectiveness of the project in modifying those child rearing attitudes measured by the PAAT. (See objective 6 previously stated).

It is recommended that efforts be exerted toward continuing parental involvement in the project. It is also recommended that objectives relating to parental involvement be reevaluated and rewritten. Consideration must be given to specific acceptable indicators of project impact on parental behaviors. When these behaviors have been identified, then they must be operationally defined. Once this is completed, objectives developed will be more valid and can be evaluated. This process may necessitate the development of new instruments. Thus, reevaluation of the parental involvement component of the project needs to be started very soon.

TABLE III

PRE AND POST TEST COMPARISONS
OF PARENT RESPONSES ON THE PAAT

INSTRUMENT/SUBTEST	PRETEST	POST TEST	t-RATIO
PAAT Creativity	M = 2.7[a] s = .2[a]	M = 2.7 s = .1	.940
PAAT Frustration	M = 2.7 s = .1	M = 2.8 s = .3	1.470
PAAT Control	M = 2.6 s = .1	M = 2.6 s = .2	0.000
PAAT Play	M = 3.0 s = .3	M = 3.0 s = .3	.367
PAAT Teaching-Learning	M = 3.1 s = .3	M = 3.2 s = .5	1.679
PAAT Total	M = 2.8 s = .1	M = 2.9 s = .2	.746

*Indicates significant difference between means - $p < .05$ a. M & s rounded to nearest tenth.

ADDITIONAL PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parental involvement in the project centered around their work within the presechool classrooms as parent aides, participation in parenting classes and discussion groups.

A total of twenty (20) unique parents represented the twenty-two (22) children participating in the preschool project. A total of 11 of these 20 parents or 55.0% participated in the parenting classes. Besides the parents of preschool children, approximately seventeen parents from the community were also involved in the parent discussion groups held during the project year.

A college credit class entitled "Living With Children" was conducted for 8 weeks and carried 1 semester hour of credit. A total of 16 parents of infants, preschoolers, and teenagers who live on the reservation enrolled in this class and 8 or 9 received credit. Participants were asked to complete an evaluation form following the class.

Preschool staff, project consultants, and Parent Executive Committee members participated in an assertive trainign workshop held on May 1, 1978. Participants were also asked to complete an evaluation form following the workshop.

In evaluating the two activities described above, respondents checked or evaluated ten characteristics of the program or session. These evaluations are summarized in the table which appears later. Responses were checked on a scale ranging from poor (0) to excellent (4). The ten characteristics included the following: (1) Quality of instruction, (2) Presentations well organized, (3) Training Aids, materials for lessons, on hand and used, (4) Objectives of each lesson made clear, (5) Examples and illustrations utilized, (6) Interest maintained, (7) Participation allowed and encouraged, (8) Relevance of program, (9) Considering material covered, length of program was, (10) My overall rating of the program is:

Respondent's ratings of the ten characteristics were added and divided by the number of respondents. Thus, each of the ten characteristics was placed on a five point scale. The scale was:

4.0	3.2	2.4	1.6	.8	0
EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	BELOW AVERAGE	POOR	

The results of the analysis indicated the various characteristics of the activities were viewed by the participants as excellent. Only on the college class item concerning the area of participation allowed and encouraged was the rating on the borderline between excellent and good. (See Table IV which follows).

The evaluation therefore indicates that the participants found these activities meaningful, well organized and presented, and a significant contribution to their training and functioning within the program.

TABLE IV

ACTIVITY EVALUATION RESULTS

CHARACTERISTIC	COLLEGE CLASS #	RATING SCALE	PLACEMENT	WORKSHOP #	RATING SCALE	PLACEMENT
1. Quality of Instruction	11	3.5	Excellent	14	3.8	Excellent
2. Presentation well organized	11	3.6	Excellent	14	3.9	Excellent
3. Training aids, materials for lessons on hand and used	11	3.7	Excellent	13	3.3	Excellent
4. Objectives of each lesson made clear	11	3.6	Excellent	14	3.3	Excellent
5. Examples and illustrations utilized	10	3.6	Excellent	13	3.7	Excellent
6. Interest maintained	11	3.6	Excellent	14	3.4	Excellent
7. Participation allowed and encouraged	11	3.2	Excellent/Good	14	3.4	Excellent
8. Relevance of program	10	3.4	Excellent	14	3.6	Excellent
9. Considering material covered, length of program was	11	3.6	Excellent	14	3.6	Excellent
10. My overall rating is	11	3.6	Excellent	14	3.6	Excellent

SECTION IV

SUMMARY COMMENTS

During this third year of the project the preschool classroom laboratory has been continued and expanded. Inservice training was conducted. Home visits with each participant and parent were held prior to the beginning of school. Children were eased into the program gradually to permit adaptation and adjustment to take place. The total program was structured so that language development was stressed with the younger children using Peabody Language Development materials. In the kindergarten development in the readiness areas was stressed using the Lippencott Readiness Programs. This structure is conducive to preschool children's development.

Parents were involved in many ways in th's project. Their involvement continues to be active through the Pre-school Parent Association formed early in the project year. Parents were involved throughout the project year as classroom aides, and in parenting classes and discussion groups.

Good relationships and coordination was established with neighboring public schools and Indian Health Service.

An excellent system of communications with the community was established via a preschool newsletter published periodically. Articles also appeared in the tribal newsletter to inform the community of preschool activities. A workshop for the North American Indian Women's Association conference will be presented June 24, 1978.

Objectives and activities were pursued relative to each of the five components proposed. These objectives and activities related to the outreach to parents, family counseling, involvement of tribal elders and historians and curriculum development were modified only when it was found to be necessary. The original proposal in establishing five components was indeed ambitious and the tenacity of the project staff in attempting to fulfill the intent of each of the components is indeed praiseworthy.

Data analyses following this third year of the project indicated that the project was effective in contributing to or modifying the behavior of the preschool children in the areas of social skills and readiness skills, motor skills, language skills, and social relations skills. There was insufficient data to assess the project's effectiveness in modifying or changing parents' attitudes toward those child rearing practices measured by the PAAT instrument utilized.

It is recommended that the program embodying five (5) components be re-evaluated and rewritten for the fourth year. The preschool program implemented during the third year has yielded good results for the preschool children and should be implemented with those revisions and modifications found to be beneficial for skill development of the preschoolers. Other components of the project need to be rewritten with new objectives and new behaviors identified. Program modifications can then be made with new direction and activities related to the new objectives.

Much has been accomplished during this year and indications are that even greater results could be expected during the next project year.